

## Message Text

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11

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 OIC-04 DRC-01 /134 W

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P R 300525Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8587

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L WELLINGTON 2742

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: OCON, SEATO NZ

SUBJECT: SEATO: NEW ZEALAND REPRESENTATION AT COUNCIL MEETING

REF STATE 188872

BEGIN SUMMARY. SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS FRANK CORNER HAS UNDERTAKEN TO HAVE GNZ DECISION ON LEVEL OF ITS REPRESENTATION AT SEATO COUNCIL MEETING REVIEWED WITH A VIEW TO HAVING A MINISTER REPRESENT NEW ZEALAND. END SUMMARY.

1. DCM AUGUST 30 CALLED ON SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS FRANK CORNER RE LEVEL OF NEW ZEALAND'S REPRESENTATION AT FORTHCOMING SEATO COUNCIL MEETING, GOING CAREFULLY OVER POINTS IN REFTEL. WE HAD WEIGHED WHETHER AMBASSADOR SHOULD DISCUSS MATTER WITH ACTING PRIME MINISTER AND ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER HUGH WATT, BUT HAD SETTLED ON TAKING UP MATTER AT THIS STAGE WITH CORNER.

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2. DCM SAID THAT AS EMBASSY HAD MENTIONED EARLIER TO CRONER, SECRETARY KISSINGER WAS DUE TO GIVE A DINNER HONORING SEATO COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES. WE HAD LEARNED ONLY TODAY THAT PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM OF AUSTRALIA WAS LIKELY ATTEND KISSINGER DINNER. WE VERY STRONGLY HOPED THAT CORNER COULD OBTAIN FAVORABLE NEW ZEALAND DECISION ON LEVEL OF COUNCIL REPRESENTATION. OTHERWISE WE FELT THAT AMBASSADOR WOULD HAVE TO TAKE CASE PERSONALLY TO MR. WATT.

3. CORNER RESPONDED THAT HE WOULD DO HIS BEST TO HAVE A NEW ZEALAND MINISTER PRESENT AT THE COUNCIL MEETING. THE FACT WAS THE DECISION TO HAVE ONLY AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL ATTENDANCE HAD NOT BEEN WELL CONSIDERED. A COMBINATION OF ILLNESS, NEAR EXHAUSTION AND OVER SENSITIVITY TO MEDIA CRITICISM OF FOREIGN TRAVEL BY BY MINISTERS AT A TIME WHEN BALANCE OF PAYMENTS SITUATION WAS WORSENING, HAD LED PRIME MINISTER KIRK TO MAKE HASTY DECISION TO HAVE AMBASSADOR WHITE REPRESENT NEW ZEALAND AT COUNCIL MEETING. ANOTHER COMPLICATING FACTOR HAD JUST ARISEN IN THAT ACTING PRIME MINISTER WATT SEEMED DETERMINED TO ADDRESS UNGA ON SEPTEMBER 23, AS PRIME MINISTER KIRK HAD BEEN SCHEDULED TO DO. CORNER THOUGHT THE CABINET WOULD BE ABLE TO DISSUADE WATT FROM ATTENDING, BUT THIS WAS NOT CERTAIN. EVEN IF WATT DID ATTEND UNGA, HOWEVER, HE COULD NOT REMAIN IN NEW YORK LONG ENOUGH TO ATTEND THE COUNCIL SESSION DUE TO KIRK'S ILLNESS. CORNER HIMSELF COULD GO AND THIS WOULD PERHPAS CONSTITUTE A HIGHER LEVEL THAN NEW ZEALAND AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON, BUT PROBLEM WAS THAT CORNER DID NOT HAVE MINISTERIAL RANK. THIS MEANT THAT A MINISTER WOULD HAVE TO BE SELECTED. CORNER PROMISED TO TAKE UP QUESTION WITH WATT AND OTHER MINISTERS WITH A VIEW TO PICKING AMINISTER TO ATTEND. HE WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH EMBASSY ON MATTER.

4. COMMENT: WE SHALL FOLLOW MATTER CLOSELY WITH CORNER, OR AT A HIGHER LEVEL IF THIS IS NEEDED, AND KEEP THE DEPARTMENT INFORMED.  
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